p. 36

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C.I.A. Memo Says Warren Unit Slighted Leads on Foreign Plot

WASHINGTON, March 20 (AP)—A Central Intelligence Agency memorandum says the Warren Commission should have given more credence to the possibility that President Kennedy's assassination was a result of a foreign conspiracy, particularly in light of two promising leads that were not pursued.

"The Warren Commisison report should have left a wider 'window' for this contingency," accordingto the memo, which was written in May 1975 at the request of the Rockefeller Commission. "That, indeed, was the opinion at the working level, particularly in the counterintelligence component in the C.I.A., in 1964."

The 27-page document emphasizes that, though solid evidence to overturn the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed Mr. Kennedy "did (and does) not exist in Washington," such evidence "could exist in Moscow and-or Havana."

The two most promising leads to such evidence, the memo says, are testimony about 1959 conversations between Oswald and Cuban officials, and a public threat by Fidel Castro in September 1963, against the lives of United States leaders.

Both leads must be considered of great significance in investigating a possible foreign conspiracy, but neither was followed up, the memo says.

The memorandum was among some 1,500 pages of documents on the shooting that the C.I.A. turned over to the commission headed by Vice President Rockefeller, which was investigating allegations of wrongdoing in the intelligence community.

The documents have been declassified by the Central Intelligence Agency in response to a Freedom of Information request filed by David W. Belin, who served as counsel to both the Rockefeller Commission and the Commission headed by the late Chief Justice Earl Warren, which investigated the Kennedy assassination.

The C.I.A. released a set of documents to The Associated Press yesterday.

Cuban Defector, Cited by C.I.A., Hinted Oswald Link to Havana

p. 28 3/22/76

WASHINGTON, March 21 (AP)—A Cuban defector told the Central Intelligence Agency in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald may have been in contact with Cuban intelligence agents seven weeks before he killed President Kennedy, newly released documents show.

The defector, described as "a well-placed individual who has been in contact with officers of the Cuban Directorate General of Intelligence," also told the C.I.A that the Cuban intelligence agency took extraordinary security precautions immediately after the Kennedy slaying, according to the documents.

The information was relayed to the Warren Commission, which "saw no need to pursue this angle any further," according to the C.I.A. memorandum, written in June 1964. No mention of the defector or his information appears in the report of the commission headed by the late Chief Justice Earl Warren, which concluded that there was no evidence of a foreign or domestic conspiracy behind the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Memorandums regarding the Cuban defector were among some 1,500 pages of C.I.A. memo stating that the Warren Commission should have given more credence to the possibility of a foreign conspiracy in light of promising leads that were not pursued.

The documents were originally provided to a commission headed by Vice President Rockefeller that investigated allegations of wrongdoing in the American intelligence community last year. They were later turned over to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, whose subcommittee, headed by Senator Richard S. Schweiker, Republican of Pennsylvania, is investigating the Kennedy assassination.

The memos regarding the Cuban defector quote him as saying, "I have no personal knowledge of Lee Harvey Oswald or his activities and I do not know that Oswald was an agent of the Cuban Government." However, the same memos offer differing accounts of what the unidentified defector said about the possibility of a contact between Oswald and Cuban intelligence agents.

The first mention of the defector appears in a May 5, 1964, internal C.I.A. memo in which he is quoted as saying that Owald "was in contact" with three Cuban agents "before, during and after" his visits to the Cuban and Soviet embassies in Mexico City in late September and early October 1963. A subsequent memo on May 8, 1964, quotes the sources as saying that he believed that Oswald was in contact with the Cuban agents.

When the information was forwarded to the Warren Commission on May 15, 1964, a memo said, "According to the source, Oswald may have been interviewed by Vega [one of the Cuban agents] on his assistant but this is strictly conjecture on his part." A June 19 memo reporting the commission's decision not to pursue the lead any further said that the defector had "no information linking [Oswald] to the Cuban intelligence services in any manner."